

Pomona Hall
Camden, Camden County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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Pomona Hall
Camden, Camden County, New Jersey

Owner: City of Camden. The building is occupied
by the Camden County Historical Society.

Date of Erection: 1726-1788

Architect:

Builder: Joseph Cooper, Jr. for the 1726 section;
Marmaduke Cooper for the newer section

Present Condition: Good

Number of Stories: Two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone

Exterior walls - front
Flemish bond with black
glazed headers; west
elevation in alternating
header and streacher rows;
the end walls form gables
as settings for the wide
chimney breast

Interior walls - plaster;
left side of hall wide
tongued groved boards,
most fireplace ends paneled

Roof - pitch with dormers
and with a roof walk
between the chimney breasts

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Historical Data:

Joseph Cooper, Jr., who built the first part of Pomona Hall, was the son of Joseph Cooper, Sr., and the grandson of William Cooper, who came to this country from England in 1678 or 1679. He settled first at Burlington, moving to Pyne Point in 1681. Here he purchased a tract of three hundred acres from the proprietors and from the Indian chief Tallacca.

On June 12, 1697, Joseph Cooper, Sr., purchased a tract of four hundred and twelve acres from Abraham and Joshua Carpenter along the south branch of Cooper's Creek. This tract was conveyed to his son Joseph, Jr., on December 18, 1714. Initials on the north chimney breast indicate that Joseph and Mary Cooper built that portion of the house in 1726. Joseph Cooper died in 1749. The property passed to his younger brother, Isaac.

Joseph Cooper was a member of the General Assembly from Gloucester County from 1730 to 1749. He was a friend of Benjamin Franklin. Franklin mentions him as one of the friends he acquired during his stay in Burlington. The memorial and the record of the Friends Meeting of Haddonfield says of him:

"He was an exemplary friend, and serviceable amongst us in many respects, careful to rule in his own house. He departed this life about the first of the eighth month 1749, having express'd little before that he had done justly, loved mercy, and hoped that he had been careful to walk humbly."

The next owner of Pomona Hall was Marmaduke Cooper, Isaac's son. Marmaduke, although a Quaker, took part in the struggle between the mother country and the colonies before the war started. He was a member of the Committee of Observation for Gloucester County and a member of the Committee of Correspondence. When the Philadelphia Meeting of Suffering advised all Friends to be conscientious objectors, he withdrew from all activities.

In 1788 Marmaduke built the south portion of Pomona Hall. The marking on the east of the other chimney indicates that Marmaduke and Mary Cooper were the builders. This later portion conforms to the architecture of the rest of the house. The addition is clearly shown by the vertical joint in the brickwork on both front and rear walls close by the hallway doors, and also by the headings of the cellar windows, the older part was crudely arch by a single row of bricks while in the newer section keyed stone lintels are used.

The north wall of the hallway was one of the original outside walls; it is carried to the roof beams. The partition walls running laterally between the front and the back rooms on the north side of the house furnish the support for the ceiling rafters of the attic rooms.

The woodwork of the older part of the house is marked by severe simplicity and symmetrical lines. The newels are plain; the balustrades are gracefully turned and fastened by wooden pegs. In the original living room, which is on the left side of the hallway, is a fireplace which originally had a facing of blue tiles.

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It is not known when the house was first called Pomona Hall; but it is marked on Hill's Map of Philadelphia and Environs, published in 1809, as such.

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Material collected by Elizabeth
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Supervising Historian

Approved:



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District Officer

Rev. Jan. 25, 37-T.W.